



PRESS RELEASE

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DesignEuropa Awards 2023 to recognise Maria Benktzon and 8 finalists announced

- **Lifetime Achievement Award winner is Swedish designer Maria Benktzon, renowned for her innovative and inclusive designs of everyday objects and featured at the prestigious MoMA, the National Museum of Sweden and the Smithsonian.**
- **Eight finalist designs shortlisted from Austria, Croatia, Estonia, Hungary, Italy, Poland and Slovenia.**
- **The winners will be announced in Berlin on 5 September.**

The [DesignEuropa Awards](#) finalists are revealed today, along with the winner of the Lifetime Achievement Award. Organised by the European Union Intellectual Property Office (EUIPO), the DesignEuropa Awards recognise and honour great products and designers in the field of industrial design.

From the iconic coffee pot used by flight attendants of SAS Airlines to the ubiquitous Tupperware knives, Lifetime Achievement Award winner **Maria Benktzon** has been a key figure of user-centred design. She has developed an inclusive approach to design by creating elements that allow people with reduced mobility to remain independent. The jury was impressed by the social impact of her designs and the role which ergonomics has played.

The 8 finalists come from **7 European countries** (Austria, Croatia, Estonia, Hungary, Italy, Poland and Slovenia). They cover established brands such as Smeg, Cleveron, Sobočan and Nowy Styl, and newcomers Jarsty, Mindful Design and Craft, Remigo and Hard Body Hang.

The products represent a wide range of sectors, such as coffee, home appliances, office furniture, retail logistics, household cooking, mobility and sports. All products prioritise **sustainability** and **social impact**, and are responsible for setting new standards in the design industry.

The winners will be announced at the awards ceremony, which will take place in **Berlin**, on Tuesday **5 September**, and will be live-streamed. During the ceremony, the Lifetime Achievement Award will also be presented to Maria Benktzon.

The Executive Director of the EUIPO, **Christian Archambeau**, said:

The DesignEuropa Awards highlight the effective use of design and how its protection can help drive economic, social, cultural and environmental





development. Furthermore, we have the opportunity to acknowledge eight impressive finalists from the Industry and Small and Emerging Companies sector as well as the work of Maria Benktzon through the Lifetime Achievement Award. Maria's innovative, ergonomic and consumer-friendly designs of household objects have been essential in demonstrating that design for all and universal design creates improved environments that benefit everyone.

The [DesignEuropa Awards Jury](#) is composed of design professionals, academics, entrepreneurs, former winners and intellectual property experts, who draw on their experience and expertise in their given area to judge the proposals. The Jury is led by **Isabelle Vérilhac**, president of the Bureau of European Design Associations (BEDA) and Director of Innovation and International Affairs at the Saint-Étienne UNESCO City.

Maria Benktzon, a unique designer for everyone's needs

Maria Benktzon, from Sweden, is an exceptional designer recognised throughout Europe and the world for her innovative, ergonomic, and consumer-friendly designs of household objects.

Her work combines usability and functionality with aesthetics and a strong sense of ethics. With a focus on designing facilities for people with disabilities, many of her works have become landmarks of inclusive design.

Some of her most notable works include equipment to assist people with disabilities in independent living, such as crutches, walking sticks, personal hygiene tools and a set of knives that accommodate arthritic hands. She also designed the iconic drip-free coffee pot for Scandinavian Airlines (SAS), the world's first angled kitchen knife, the Knork Fork, and the Eat Drink Plate.

In 1968, Maria joined Henrik Wahlforss' group, which established the award-winning design agency, Ergonomidesign. Later, the company was rebranded as Veryday and acquired by McKinsey & Company in 2016.

The finalist designs

Almost 700 applications and nominations were received from 43 countries for both the Small and Emerging Companies and Industry categories.

The **Small and Emerging Companies** category recognises outstanding designs from small companies as well as from recently established companies, regardless of their size. The following designs have been selected as finalists for this category (in alphabetical order):





Jarsty (Italy): All-in-one microwavable cooking system. (Jarsty S.r.l.; Designer: Giuseppe Maurizio Scutellà)



Mindful Design Coffee Brewer (Austria): Pour over filter coffee set. (Mindful Design and Craft; Designer: Petra Wieser)



RemigoOne (Slovenia): Integrated electric outboard motor. (Remigo, d.o.o.; Designer: Ajda Bertok)



ZigZag Boulder (Hungary): Outdoor modular climbing wall system. (Hard Body Hang; Designer: H3Hungary Kft./ Erdélyi, Tamás)

The **Industry category** recognises entries from large and medium-sized companies. The following designs have been selected as finalists for this category (in alphabetical order):



Cleveron 402 (Estonia): Automated self-service pickup point for click-and-collect orders. (Cleveron AS; Designer: Lauri Hirvesaar)



Full Automatic Espresso Coffee Machine (Italy): Coffee machine which offers the possibility of grinding coffee beans and makes up to 7 different types of coffee. (Smeg Spa; Designers: Vittorio Bertazzoni, Matteo Bazzicalupo, Raffaella Mangiarotti)



The Performer MOVO (Croatia): Compact workspace for remote working. (Sobočan d.o.o; Designer: Sobocan design studio)



WithME (Poland): Collaborative office chair offering advanced ergonomics with minimal adjustments. (Nowy Styl sp. z o.o; Designer: Martin Ballendat (Design Ballendat))



The awards honour designs brought to the market with the protection of the [registered Community design \(RCD\)](#). The RCD is a popular intellectual property (IP) right, registered at the EUIPO, and valid across all 27 EU Member States. This year marks the [20th anniversary of the RCD](#). Over the past two decades, the EUIPO has received over **1.8 million** RCD applications and currently registers over **100 000** designs a year.

Design is a vital motor of economic growth and job creation. However, a recent [EUIPO report](#) revealed that there is an important gender gap in the European design industry. Only **24% of designers in the EU are women**, who earn on average **13% less than their male colleagues**. Meanwhile, some non-EU countries (South Korea, China, and the US) have a much higher proportion of women designers.

ABOUT THE DESIGNEUROPA AWARDS

The DesignEuropa Awards have become a firm fixture on the international industrial design calendar. Now in their fourth edition, the awards are presented in collaboration with the [German Federal Ministry of Justice](#) and the [German Patent and Trade Mark Office](#). The DesignEuropa Awards ceremony will take place on 5 September 2023 in Berlin. Berlin was appointed a City of Design by UNESCO in 2006 and Germany is the second leading country protecting designs at EU level. Previous editions of the DesignEuropa Awards have taken place in Milan (Italy), Warsaw (Poland) and Eindhoven (the Netherlands).

[See the winners of previous editions of DesignEuropa Awards.](#)

ABOUT THE EUIPO

The [EUIPO](#) is one of the largest decentralised agencies of the EU, based in Alicante, Spain. Ranked as one of the [most innovative intellectual property offices in the world](#), the EUIPO manages the registration of the European Union trade mark (EUTM) and the registered Community design (RCD), both of which provide intellectual property protection in all Member States. It also carries out cooperation activities with the national and regional intellectual property offices of the EU and hosts the European Observatory on Infringements of Intellectual Property Rights.

Media contact

EUIPO Communication Service

Tel.: +34 653 674 113

press@euipo.europa.eu

